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Under pressure from CORE, the Berkeley superintendent of schools established a citizens' committee to investigate and present facts regarding the extent and the effects of school de facto segregation in the public schools. It was found that the housing pattern and the boundary lines of the schools had resulted in the enrollment of 79% of the students in segregated elementary schools, two segregated junior high schools, one integrated junior high school. There is only one senior high school.

Striking differences in achievement were found between white and minority group students. The schools did not differ in class characteristics or turnover. Cultural differences in the homes were partly responsible. Ability grouping is a common practice in the junior high schools and high school. At Willard, the only junior high school where the percentage of Negroes approximates the citywide percentage, ability grouping results in racial segregation. The white students are usually in the high-ability groups, while the Negro students are usually in the low-ability groups.

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SCHOOL SEGREGATION IN BERKELEY

Citizens Committee

Background material is from a Berkeley school board press release of November 14, 1963. The remainder of the article is taken from De Facto Segregation Study Committee, De Facto Segregation in the Berkeley Public Schools *(Berkeley: Berkeley Unified School District, November, 1963).*

In May, 1962, the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) made a presentation to the Berkeley, California board of education, asking for a study of de facto segregation throughout the Berkeley school system. In September the board adopted the recommendation of superintendent of schools, C. H. Wennerberg, that a citizens' committee be appointed and, with that, the machinery was set in motion.

Part of the board's resolution was a request that individuals and groups within the community nominate prospective members for the committee. Over 100 names were put before the board and in December, 1962, the committee was appointed. In choosing the 33 members, the board picked a group that would represent the entire community and a broad balance of geographic, racial and ethnic groups was achieved. Attention was also paid to "liberal" and "conservative" views so that varying degrees of community opinion would be represented as well.

Wennerberg and the board promised full support to the project and Thomas D. Wogaman, coordinator of data processing on the superintendent's staff, was appointed to act as liaison man between the committee and the school administration.

The board not only offered moral and personnel support but directed all school personnel to cooperate with the committee. Every door was to be opened to them.

It was in this atmosphere that the committee held its first meeting on January 10, 1963, and received its formal "charge" from the board:

1. To determine the extent of de facto segregation in Berkeley;
2. To investigate the effects of such segregation on the education of children;
3. To bring your findings, conclusions and recommendations to the Berkeley board of education.

Dr. John Hadsell, Presbyterian University Pastor in Berkeley, was named committee chairman by the board and with that action the 33 members went to work.

The first months were spent in studying materials in the field and a lengthy bibliography was compiled. The school administration provided the committee with complete background on the 14 elementary schools, three junior high schools, and Berkeley High and McKinley Adult and Continuation School. A "racial census" was made of school enrollment. (It should be noted that this census was a head-count done by the classroom teachers and never became a part of either the school's or the individual's records.) In addition, the committee was provided with a racial breakdown of Berkeley residential patterns and complete information on the neighborhood system of school attendance, which has been the Berkeley pattern for generations. Experts in different fields were invited to address the group and like the committee members, offered their services without compensation.

During these first few months the committee organized itself into subcommittees to go into individual schools. In addition, plenary sessions were held every other Thursday from January through mid-May, 1963. On May 16, a public hearing was held and over 50 local organizations were invited to send representatives. Sixteen organizations and individuals testified and were questioned by the committee. The meeting was then thrown open to questions from the public. A transcript of the proceed-

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ings was kept so that the committee could have a record of the community's views.

A few weeks later the sub-committees brought in their findings. The committee was then ready to put its work on paper.

An editorial sub-committee was appointed to prepare a rough draft of the final report and on July 1, a non-binding "sense" vote of the entire committee was taken to guide them in their work. On October 3, after two months of almost weekly meetings, the draft was ready for consideration.

Succeeding meetings were devoted to discussion and revision. Section by section, the provisions were put to a vote. At this point there were times when members of the committee would meet two or three nights a week, with meetings lasting well into the early morning hours.

Finally, on the night of November 11, the last draft was on the table and the last vote was taken and recorded. With that action, the committee closed its final meeting. On November 19, 1963, the board of education heard a full presentation of the report.

Early in the study the committee adopted a working definition of de facto segregation: *De facto segregation exists in any school whose white-nonwhite ratio varies significantly from the same ratio of the District as a whole.* The committee did not attempt to establish exact percentages or quotas in adopting this definition, but left it for reasonable men to recognize de facto segregation where it exists.

RACIAL COMPOSITION OF THE SCHOOLS

Although the city-wide racial distribution (1960 census) was:

73.8% Caucasian 19.6% Negro
6.6% other non-Caucasian

the racial distribution of school children in the District (November, 1960) was:

60.3% Caucasian 32.0% Negro
7.7% other non-Caucasian

The racial distribution of school children in the District (October, 1963) is:

54.0% Caucasian 37.3% Negro
8.7% other non-Caucasian

Total Berkeley children in integrated elementary schools: 1,843 (21.0%)
Total Berkeley children in segregated elementary schools: 6,968 (79.0%)
The districting policy of the board of education at the elementary school level has been governed by the neighborhood school concept. While there have been limited "zones of choice" in the past, between certain schools, these have been eliminated. The neighborhood served by the various schools have remained substantially the same for many years. However, the exact boundaries have been changed several times. According to Mr. A. B. Campbell, Assistant Superintendent for Educational Services, there have been at least two such boundary changes in addition to elimination of zones of choice within the past decade. These changes generally have been made to provide for improved building utilization and to balance enrollments. The policy has been to "draw lines where the children were and where the schools had room for them." The committee finds that the neighborhood concept in Berkeley has produced de facto segregated schools.

The present housing pattern and the present boundary lines at the junior high school level have resulted in two de facto segregated junior high schools and one integrated junior high school.

The committee concludes that children of equal basic ability are not learning language skills as well in those schools that have a large Negro enrollment as in the schools with a predominantly Caucasian enrollment. Language achievement is basic to further education and to economic and social success. The large discrepancies between the results achieved at different schools represent, therefore, a serious challenge to the concept of equality of educational opportunity. For the District as a whole, the results on the reading test show the

upper quarter of Berkeley eighth graders to be in the top 1% nationally; the upper half in Berkeley are in the top 3% nationally. Clearly, the upper half at Berkeley are achieving extremely well, but the bottom quarter are doing very poorly on a national basis.

The committee found that certain suspected factors could not be held responsible for these striking differences in achievement. The schools in different parts of the city do not differ importantly in class size or in adequacy of school buildings. Furthermore, the teachers in the different areas of the city do not seem to differ in qualifications, dedication to their task, or in rate of turnover.

Among the factors causing the differences in achievement, cultural differences in the homes are undoubtedly responsible in part. Probably the differences in achievement also reflect in part different attitudes held by both teachers and students in different parts of the city. One teacher said, "This is the final aspect of attending segregated schools. The trouble is that our children are measured against themselves. Their IQs are not channeled into ability to take tests, because that is not as important as some of the other things in their lives."

How Grouping Is Done: Seventh and eighth grade students are placed in classes according to ability. This placement is made by the junior high counselors and is based, in part, on recommendations of the 6th grade teachers and on other factors such as test scores and grades. In some schools the counselors talk with the teachers; in some schools they do not. In the 9th grade, grouping is largely abandoned because of the number of elective subjects and consequent difficulties of scheduling; there are, however, Advanced Creative English classes in 9th grade. The number of ability groups differs among the junior high schools. Willard has four groups, plus a small one for mentally retarded children. At Garfield, each English class is considered to be an ability group, but the classes are also categorized into three large groups: (1) children probably of university caliber, (2) those probably of general college ability, and (3) those probably not of college ability. Usually a student is placed in the same ability group for all subjects. Occasionally, if there is a very large difference between a student's abilities in different subjects, he may be placed in high groups for some subjects and low for others. Because this complicates scheduling, such "cross-sectioning" is not done often.

Changes in ability grouping are made from year to year as the child's work warrants, and some changes are made even within a school term.

Effects of Ability Grouping: Ability grouping is a common practice in junior high and high schools throughout the United States. There is, however, very little solid evidence to indicate that it makes much difference in students' achievement, as recent reviews of the problem show. Grouping is generally favored by teachers because it reduces somewhat the range of ability within a class and therefore makes it somewhat easier to teach. Actually, if the grouping is done on an overall basis instead of subject by subject, a wide spread of ability is still found within each class. This is because abilities for different subjects are not closely related.

At Willard, the only junior high school in Berkeley where the percentage of Negroes approximates the city-wide percentage, ability grouping results in racial segregation.

Thus, while the total student body of Willard is racially balanced, most classes within the school are not. It appears, then, that the difference in reading achievement which develops during elementary school is a major factor in causing racial segregation at the junior high school level.

The public schools are social institutions which are concerned with more than simply conveying information to children and youth. Therefore, the committee has been concerned not only for the formal parts of school life, but also for those activities which are generally called "extra-curricular." The committee found several activities in the school which ap-

pear to be influenced by racial segregation. While the board of education has abolished all official connection between Berkeley High School and social clubs, these clubs continue unofficially. "Many students and teachers feel that social clubs have a bad effect on the school and upon the students who are 'segregated' into these clubs," reports one teacher. Apparently the social clubs among Berkeley High School students follow an almost exclusively racial pattern, which helps confirm the internal segregation which already exists.

The Garfield Subcommittee reported: "Children in elementary schools that do not have non-Caucasians have little opportunity to be with them through school activities. There are few inter-school events. When Cragmont has a play-day, it is with Thousand Oaks. When the Garfield basketball team goes to Burbank, the Garfield boys feel uneasy at being in a Negro environment."

It may be concluded from these samples of the total evidence that extra-curricular activities are not being used in a serious and sustained way to overcome the ill effects of de facto segregation in the schools.

It would appear that progress toward the board's policy of employment of teachers without regard to race, color, or religion is being made. The board's policy of balanced racial distribution in teacher placement, however is reportedly not being fully practiced by the personnel office.

With regard to teacher attitudes toward persons of other race, color, or religion, "applicants are informed of the inter-racial nature of the city during the (hiring) interview and an attempt is made to find out if they have prejudice. If an applicant says he is prejudiced and asks for a Caucasian school, he is not hired. The goal is to hire people who could serve any school." It is, of course, difficult to determine in an interview whether or not a prospective teacher is racially prejudiced.

The committee found that de facto segregation has a profound effect on the education of our children. This is evident in the performance of their academic achievement, in their relationships with their fellow students, in their views of themselves, and in tehi. future careers and responsibilities as citizens.

The De Facto Segregation Study Committee invites further community study and response. It suggests that Parent Teachers organizations as well as service, fraternal, church, and synagogue groups continue to study various aspects of the problem.

By working together energetically, the citizens, the board of education, and the school teachers, counselors, and administrators can bring about a continuing program of enhanced educational and cultural opportunities for all Berkeley children.

DOUBLE-SCREENING OF COLLEGE STUDENTS

Charles C. Killingsworth